

AN ALARM TO THE PRIESTS,

OR, A

Message from Heaven,

To forewarn them of the dreadfull day of the Lord
which will suddenly overtake them, unless by speedy and
unfeigned repentance they return to the Lord.

With a Call to all people to come out of Babilon least
they be made partakers of her plagues.

By a follower of the Lamb, one whose eye sees the down-fall of
Babilon, and waits for the exaltation of Sion, *Tho. Ellwood.*

The Preamble.

MAny, yea very many have been the warnings and admonitions
which the Lord hath given unto the Priests of this generation,
yet have they not repented and turned unto him, but have hardened
their hearts against his reproof, and have gone on in their disobe-
dience and rebellion against him; even provoking him to pour down his
Judgements upon them, and utterly to cut them off from being a people
any more for ever. Long hath he waited upon them, to be gracious un-
to them; and long hath he born with them, that as length (if it were
possible) they might see and be made sensible of their great unkindness,
and monstrous ingratitude wherewith they have continually repaid his
great goodness and loving-kindness unto them; and yet how loath hath
he been to stir up all his anger against them: how unwilling to destroy
them!

And now once more hath he stretched out his golden Scepter unto
them, and hath raised up his Spirit in the meane of his servants (ut-
tering his mighty voice through an earthen vessell, that all the glory
may be unto himself) to warn them yet once more of the eminent perill
which

which hangs over their heads, and will suddenly drop upon them, except they repent and return unto him. O that they would hear that their souls might live: for nothing but speedy and unfeigned repentance, can divert the wrath of God from falling on their heads.

The Lord hath in tender mercy unto them, given them a day to work in, but alas they have wrought the works of darkness; he expected they should bring forth fruit unto him, but they have been fruitfull in nothing but in doing evill. He visited them in his tender love, and would have gathered them under his wing, as a hen doth her chickens, but they would not. Hitherto they have slighted the many offers of his love unto them, and have not regarded the day of their visitation, but now their day fluteth away apace, and the short Spar of time which yet remains to them, passeth away as a shadow, and will soon be gone over their heads, and then will they feel the Lord to be as just in punishing, as mercifull in so long sparing them: for he will arise in his might and visit them in his fury, and their plase shal be found no more.

The persecuting Spirit is a notable badge of Antichrist. This Spirit hath all along accompanied them. They have run out of one form into another, and out of that into a third, and still this Spirit hath gone along with them. It appeared in the Bishops against the Non-conformists; it appeared in the Presbyters against the Lord's people here in England, and it appeared in the Independents against God's faithfull servants in New-England.

Antichrist hath long sate (and still doth sit) as God in the Temple of God (I do not mean in the outward Temples, although he sits there also) but now is the day coming, and the hour is even at hand, of the manifestation of the righteous judgements of God, upon all the wicked, and upon all the disobedient; and then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. He that testifieth these things, saith surely I come quickly, Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus.

The Word of the Lord, which came unto me, even unto me his servant (as I lay in my bed, waiting upon him in his pure peaceable Spirit) saying, thus shalt thou say to the Priests of this nation.

HOut, houl you Merchants of Babilon, for the time is coming wherein none shall buy your merchandize. Houl and roar you children of Babilon, for your mother the false woman, the great harlot, the scarlet Whore shal shortly be stripped out of all her false coverings;

out of all her harlots attire, and shall be discovered to the eyes of all people; nakedness and shame shall be upon her, and horror and torments upon all her children. Lament and mourn you sons of Belial, shriek and cry you Priest of Baal, for sudden destruction is coming upon you, and utter desolation shall speedily overtake you, except you speedily and unfeignedly repent, and turn to the Lord with all your hearts, from whom you have gone a whoring even from the least to the greatest: I say except you speedily repent, and turn from the wickedness of your hearts and hands, you shall utterly be cut off, and that right soon; for the Lord is arisen to fight for Sion, and hath stretched out his mighty arm, to deliver his people from the cruelty, rage, and oppression of all their enemies and persecutors. Yet a little while and the cry shall be, Babilon the great is fallen, is fallen, the fall thereof shall make a great noise, the sound thereof shall go through the earth, and shall strike terror to all those who admire and love her beauty: fear, amazement, astonishment of Spirit shall seize on all those that traffick with her; fire shall consume her inward parts, howlings and roarings shall be heard in all her quarters: the Priests (her Merchants) shall wring their hands for grief, and gnaw their tongues for pain and anguish; for now shall their trade be utterly lost, now shall their merchandize utterly fail them, the great Whore, (their mother) shall be stripped, and her nakedness shall appear to their shame and torment. Howl, howl you Idol-shepherds, for utter desolation is coming upon ye, yea, sudden destruction shall overtake ye, even as an armed man shall it come upon ye, and as travail upon a woman with child, and there shall be none to deliver ye. For thus saith the Lord God of power, I, even I will take vengeance upon ye, and will recompence upon your heads the reward of your doings, for you have erred from my pure fear, and have daily grieved my pure spirit, you have crucified the Just in your selves and in others, and have hardened your hearts against my reproof, refusing to let my people go, to worship me according as I have commanded them. How often, saith the Lord, have I warned ye by my Prophets, rising up early and sending them unto ye: yet have you rejected my counsel, and would have none of my reproof; but have dealt despitefully with my messengers, beating and stoning some, imprisoning some, dismembering some, and slaying others. Yea, you have often rebelled against me saith the Lord, and have even kicked the heel against me; you have sold your selves to act wickedness, and to commit fornication with the Whore of Babilon; you have run with delight into her bed of Whoredoms, and have greedily drunk down her cup of Fornications. How

often saith the Lord, have you endeavoured to violate my peoples consciences ! How often have you exalted your selves against me, presumptuously attempting to thrust me out of my seat, & to make your selves Lords of mine heritage, by imposing laws upon my peoples consciences, which is my prerogative alone to do ! You have ravened from my spirit in your selves saith the Lord, and those that will not run to the same excess of riot with you, are even devoured by you. Lo, thus saith the Lord, you have blinded the peoples eyes, you have taken away the key of knowledge, you will not enter in your selves, and those that would enter in you forbid : you have set up Idolatry inwardly in your hearts, and outwardly also in your Idol-Temples : you have worshipped the Beast; and embraced the Whore, and are crept into a dead loathsome form and way of worship which she hath provided for you. And like Israel of old you offer unto me the lame, the blind, the imperfect Sacrifices, instead of sound, unsported, perfect, pure sacrifices, but away with your sacrifices saith the Lord, & put away your vain Oblations from before me ; for your Sacrifice of praise is abominable in my sight, the stink of your incense is loathsome in my nostrils, your offerings are unsavoury and irkesome unto me, and all your praying and preaching, your pretended duties and ordinances are a weight and a burthen upon my soul, and my spirit is grieved with them saith the Lord : therefore I will cast you off saith the Lord, even because of the wickedness that is found within your gates, and the blood of the Innocent which is found upon your skirts, and because you hate to be reproved, and strengthen your selves against me saith the Lord.

Consider this well saith the Lord, did I not cast off my chosen people the Jews for the same iniquities which are found to abound amongst you ? and shall I now spare you, O you rebellious and stiffnecked generation ! what are you better then Israel of old, that I should pass by that in you, for which I cast them off ? You have prophesied lies in my name, saith the Lord, you have run but I never sent you, you have spoken a divination of your own brains, you have stolen the Word from your neighbour, and therewith have you traded O you Merchants of Babylon You have devoured my people saith the Lord, and with feigned words have made merchandise of souls ; you have drawn away my people from my statutes and ordinances, which by the finger of my spirit are written in their hearts, and you have brought them again under a yoke of bondage, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. You have carried my people captive into Sodom and Egypt, and have hindered their passage into the spiritmall Canaan. You have defiled my living Temples saith the Lord, and joined them unto harlots, and are crept

crept into houses which the Beast set up for the Babilonish Whore to sit in.

Ah foolish people ! think you that the living eternal God will be worshipped in houses made of stones, or will be found there ? hath he not said *that he dwelleth not in Temples made with hands, but the Temple which he dwelleth in is a living Temple, and the worship which he accepteth is in the Spirit and in the Truth?* but this Temple you have defiled, this worship you have apostatized from, you are gotten into the Whores Temple, and are worshipping the beast instead of the living God. O what shall I say unto you, you disobedient people ! What could the Lord have done for you that he hath not done? Did he not about 100 years ago rend the thick vail of darkness (wherein the misery of iniquity did then work) from off the eyes of many of your forefathers, and gave them a little glimmering of his light to walk in ? And did he not (as it were) take them by the hand, and lead them out of the City Babilon, the mother of harlots ; and gave them his Spirit to be their leader ? but alas, they rebelled against their leader ; and having once despised and contemned the light in their own consciences, how suddenly did darkness (thick darkness) overshadow them again ! and then how quickly were they run back into the Subburbs of Babilon again ! yea, and prest hard to have entred the city again, and doubtless they had prevailed, had not the Lord in love and pity to them, overthrown them.

And after that the Bishops had had their day, and that the curtains of the night began to be drawn upon them : Oh how clearly did the Lord manifest himself unto many of you ! how did he open your eyes, and let you see the grosseness, deadness and emptiness of that form wherein the Bishops had long held you ? O how did he raise up in many of you a Spirit of Prayer and of supplication, to groan and cry mightily for deliverance, and that the seed might be redeemed out of bondage, and from under the yoke of the oppressor ! And was there not in many of you a living, fresh desire and panting after God and the enjoyment of his presence begotten, and for some time preserved ? Oh why did you swerve from it? did he not draw you (for then you were willing to follow him) out of Episcopacy, and give you his pure fear to walk in? and did you not Vow to him in your hearts and before men, that you would walk in his fear and
be

be guided by his Spirit? O that you had so done) & did you, not make a solemn Covenant both with God & men, that you would utterly abolish & extirpate Episcopacy? & did you not confirm that Covenant with reiterated Engagements, Protestations and Oaths? & will you now in the revolution of 20 years, wheel round about again, and take up a false rest in that dead, empty loathsome form? Ah, *who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the Truth?* what, do you not plainly see that it bends to its mother Babilon from whence it came? and will you run again into Babilon? were not your stomachs once burchened with Episcopacy, and did you not spew it up? and will you now turn back again and lick up your old vomit? Oh, do not so; do not so, do not run wilfully into destruction.

Oh the exceeding weight and guilt, which lies upon the Priests of this Nation! for of them hath this people learned to break their Vows, to break their Protestations, to break their Engagements and to violate their Oaths; in one so forward now to plead for Babilon, to fight for Babilon as they: they have drawn the people from serving the living God, and have caused them to serve strange Gods, even graven Images, fashioned with the graving tools of their own wicked inventions, and framed in the mould of their vain imaginations, one while they set up Episcopacy, another while Presbyterie; and he that will not fall down and worship the Image which they have set up, is he not forthwith cast into the fiery furnace of their cruelty and persecution? but for these things is the Lord coming upon them, and will pour out the vials of his wrath upon them; verily a day of sad calamity shall suddenly overtake them, and there shall be none to help or pity them.

Oh, the exceeding unutterable love which the Lord hath extended to this Nation! how often O you Priests hath the Lord warned you, both by his Spirit in your consciences, and also by his servants whom he hath daily raised up, and sent unto you to reprove your deadness and barrenness: but alas you have still gone on in your rebellion, and quarrelled with the messengers which the Lord hath sent unto you: they have either seemed too mean and contemptible in your sight to be taken notice of, or their message hath seemed too harsh for you to bear: and thus have you despised the messengers which he hath sent, and slighted the many offers of his love unto you. Oh how ready hath he always been to shewre down his mercies upon you! and how unworthily have you requited so great love! how gently did he at first shake the Bishops, and after that more roughly, before he quite overthrew them! yet would they not take warning. How many mild reproofs and gentle warnings hath he given to this people! yet are their hearts hardened. But now their day passeth away apace, and the night approaches wherein none can work. Oh therefore *while you have time prize it: prize the love of the Lord God: let his goodness overcome you.* O return unto the Lord with all your hearts: *Lie low before him, embrace the rod:* and submit your selves willingly to his gentle corrections and fatherly chastizements: that the Spirit of the Lord you may feel in you as a fire, burning and consuming all the works of darkness, & as an hammer to knock down, & as a sword to cut off whatsoever is

is contrary to his pure will. O I say, speedily repent you of your wickedness, Cease to do evil, and learn to do good, for your moment of time will suddenly pass away, the Bridegroom will come, and the door shall be shut; and then though you knock and cry aloud, yet shall you not be suffered to enter; but your answer shall be, *Depart from me you workers of iniquity, I know you not.* And it will not avail you then to say, Lord we have prophesied in thy Name; for hitherto you have prophesied lyes, and have spoken a divination of your own brains; you have preached for hire and filthy lucre, and like a troop of Robbers have you murdered by consent; and in Babylon have you made merchandize of souls. And because of these things is the Lord arisen in Might and Power, to plead with you; therefore humble your selves speedily before the Lord, and return unto him with broken hearts; and contrite spirits. O turn in, turn in unto Christ the Light, who lighteth every man that cometh into the world; obey his Light in your own consciences, which Light is sufficient to lead you unto God: Follow the leadings and motions of his holy Spirit in your selves, and leave every one free to do the like; oppress not the consciences of any, but let all weights and burdens be taken off, and leave the people free to worship God, where, when, and how himself shall command them. And cease any longer to deceive souls, or to traffick any longer with the Whore of Babylon: for verily for these things the Lord God will visit, and if you wilfully persist in your rebellion against him, you shall not escape the stroke of his Justice, but his indignation and fury shall break out upon you, and shall utterly consume you from off the earth. O you Priests, consider this thing, and be not stout-hearted against the Lord, neither reject the Message which he hath sent you: For behold, I call both Heaven and Earth, both Men and Angels to witness against you, that I have delivered unto you the Message of the Lord, which if you reject, his Plagues shall be your portion.

Babylon the great is falling, is falling, the Whore, the great Whore (with whom the Kings of the earth have committed Fornication, who hath bewitched the Nations with the cup of her Sorceries) shall be destroyed, and that ere it be long; her Scarlet coverings shall be torn off, and her flesh shall be burnt with fire; her Merchandize shall decay, her Traffick shall fail her, her children shall howl and roar, for grief and anguish of spirit shall come upon them; all her Officers and Attendants shall lament and mourn bitterly for her; her Priests and her Prophets, her Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Arch-Deacons, Deacons and Deans; her Parson, Rectors, Chaplains, Vicars and Curates, shall sit down and bewail for the destruction of their Mother, and shall sigh and lament for the misery that is coming upon them. For this shall be the judgement of Babylon, (saith the Lord) in one day shall her Plagues come upon her, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for great is the Lord God who judgeth her. Her Merchants shall weep and lament over her, for no man buyeth her Merchandize any more, even her Merchandize of souls, wherein she greatly traded. As a Millstone shall she be thrown with violence into the sea, and shall be found no more at all.

And all those who refuse to be divorced from her, who creep into her bed of Whoredoms, and drink her Cup of Fornications, who reject the mercy of the Lord in this day of the manifestation of his tender love, who hate to be

be reprov'd, who reject his counsel, and will have none of his advice, whose hearts are hard as an iron sinew, and whose brows are become as brass; who continue in their stout-heartedness, rebellion, and witchcraft against the Lord and his Ancients, and will not have him to reign over them; nor willingly suffer him to reign peaceably in others: I say, these who cling so close to Babylon, shall be made partakers with her of her judgements. They shall fall as the falls, they shall perish as she perisheth: even from the highest pinacles of her temples shall they precipitately tumble down, and be buried in her ruine. Instead of her soft perfumed beds, shall a bed of torment be prepared for them; and instead of her sweet delicious potions, which out of her golden Cup they drank, shall the pure wrath of the Lord be given them (without any mixture of mercy or pity) in the Cup of his burning fury; the Vials of his Wrath shall be poured out upon them, rottenness shall enter into their bones, their memory shall rot, stink, and be loathsome unto the Nations round about them, and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the ho'y Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb forever and for ever; and the day hastens wherein this shall be accomplished: the Lord hath said it and it shall assuredly come to pass.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord, *Come out of her, come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues:* For her sin have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Make haste out of her, O people, and escape for your lives, stay not in all the plain, but escape to the Mountain, lest you be consumed; run no longer from hill to mountain, & from mountain to hill, wandering about like sheep without a shepherd; but escape quickly unto *that Mountain which shall be established in the top of the Mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills.* And take heed that you look not back; Remember Lot's Wife. Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean things; go ye out from the midst of her, cast away from you all your transgressions: whereby ye have transgressed, and make ye a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye dye, O house of Israel?

O ye Priests of England, hear the Word of the Lord concerning ye: *Wo unto ye, Wo unto ye from the Lord God, for you have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and are like is: perish in your gain saying as did Core.* You drink of the best, and feed of the fat, but this know assuredly, *that this fatted beast is for the slaughter; you clothe of the finest of the Fleece, and like greedy wolves ye devour the Flock; you cause the people to err, you lead the simple ones of the way, & the blind into the ditch; you have blasphemed my Name, & defiled my Temples, joyning your selves unto Idols, yet you are not ashamed to lean upon the Lord, saying, is not the Lord amongst us, none evil shall come upon us? What! shall not the Lord visit for these things? yea verily, for these things will the Lord God visit, he will bring you down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with you in the valley of decision, and the slain of the Lord shall be many.*

But peace shall be to Sion, and to the whole Israel of God, and there shall be nothing to make them afraid; for this is the Word of the Lord concerning them; Say unto the Righteous, *that is shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruits of their doings.*

THE END

LONDON, Printed for Robert Wilson, at the Black-spread-Eagle and Wind-Mill in Martins Lane, 1660.

